

# **HOUSE . . . . . No. 600**

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By Ms. Balser of Newton, petition of Ruth B. Balser and others relative to federal and state benefits paid to low income elders and persons with disabilities. Elder Affairs.

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## **The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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### **PETITION OF:**

Ruth B. Balser	Barbara A. L'Italian
Robert Correia	Mark C. Montigny
Susan C. Tucker	Bruce J. Ayers
Ellen Story	James M. Murphy
John P. Fresolo	Tom Sannicandro
Christine E. Canavan	Denise Provost
Kay Khan	Martin J. Walsh
William N. Brownsberger	David B. Sullivan
Matthew C. Patrick	Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.

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In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

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### **AN ACT REGARDING LOW INCOME ELDERS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1     SECTION 1. Section 1 of chapter 117A of the General Laws, as  
2 appearing in the 2004 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding  
3 at the end thereof the following words:—

4     A person who is eligible for assistance under the provisions of  
5 this chapter, and who is maintaining his or her own home, shall  
6 receive monthly benefits calculated at the same amount of benefits  
7 otherwise provided to an assistance unit of the same size available  
8 under chapter one hundred and eighteen.

1     SECTION 2. Said chapter 117A is further amended by inserting  
2 after section 10 the following section:—

3     Section 11. Representation to secure federal disability benefits.  
4     To maximize the receipt of federal benefits and to maximize  
5 reimbursement of interim assistance paid by the Commonwealth

6 under this chapter, the Department shall enter into a contact with the  
7 Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation for the purpose of  
8 providing legal advice and representation to disabled recipients in  
9 order for said recipients to secure Supplemental Security Income  
10 benefits administered by the Social Security Administrations.

1 SECTION 3. Chapter 18 of the General Laws, as appearing in the  
2 2004 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after  
3 section 30 the following section:—

4 Section 31. Increase federal nutrition benefits for elders and  
5 persons with disabilities.

6 To maximize federal food stamp benefits for elder and disabled  
7 persons, the department shall screen applicants for and recipients of  
8 federal food stamp benefits who are sixty years of age or older or  
9 who are disabled for unreimbursed medical expenses which may be  
10 allowed as deductions from countable income under federal law in  
11 calculating the amount of food stamps for which the applicant or  
12 recipient may be eligible. The department shall take reasonable steps  
13 to assist said elder and disabled persons to secure the verification  
14 necessary to claim said medical deductions when after inquiry such  
15 assistance is requested by the applicant or recipient.